

CANADIAN IMMIGRATION HOTLINE



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Until September 11, 2001, the 1985 bombing of **Air India Flight 182** was the deadliest terrorist attack anywhere, ever. It remains the worst mass murder in Canadian history. On June 23 of that year, 329 people were killed - 280 of them Canadians [including two of editor **Paul Fromm's** former students] The flight left Toronto, then Montreal bound for London, then India. It disappeared from radar off the coast of Ireland where the search for survivors and answers began. Despite the atrocity being planned and executed in Canada, Canada left, it for others to investigate. The identity of the perpetrators was an open secret, but only one was ever convicted and handed a piddling sentence. The case was bungled, or worse and bereaved families have now been waiting for some kind of closure for nearly forty years. On January 8, **Justin Trudeau** "vowed to hold Iran accountable for the tragedy of **Ukrainian Airlines Flight 752**. The passenger plane was shot down by Iranian missiles three years ago Sunday killing everyone on board, many of them Canadians. At a memorial marking the third anniversary of the **Ukrainian Airlines** tragedy, the Prime Minister spoke. The theme of this remembrance service was *'Woman, Life, Freedom.'* Along with worldwide protests against the recent actions of Iran's government against women, this event was a memorial for **Ukrainian Airlines Flight 752**, shot down by the Iranian military's surface to air missiles on this day in 2020 after taking off from Tehran. All 176 people on board were killed, including 55 Canadian citizens and 30 permanent residents of Canada. ... The Prime Minister says Canada is demanding binding arbitration to hold Iran accountable and force them to pay reparations, or it will take them to the international criminal court." (**CHCH**, January 8, 2023) Meanwhile the Air India families continue to wait. Perhaps, Trudeau is too close to the radical Sikh separatists seeking n independent **Khalistan (Punjab)**, a fringe of whom perpetrated the **Air India** atrocity.

The Immigration Onslaught --Are We Finally Waking Up?

"Canadians are increasingly worried about immigration. A recent Leger Poll found that 49 per cent of us think the federal government's new target of 500,000 immigrants a year is too many, while fully 75 per cent are concerned the plan will result in excessive demand for housing and social services. For his part, the immigration minister, **Sean Fraser**, tells us we need not worry: immigrants themselves will provide the labour needed to build the housing stock they'll need. [Why not import seriously unhealthy immigrants and at the same time, import foreign-born nurses and doctors to care for them]? The majority of Canadians have always welcomed immigrants and believe they benefit the economy and themselves. What worries them today is the prospect of mass immigration that they believe the housing market cannot absorb without much higher prices. They know the minister's soothing reassurance is not supported by experience. Past immigration did increase the labour force but did not prevent high housing costs. Excessive regulations and rent control are the main reasons housing

is so expensive, not a shortage of labour. Immigrants not only add to the demand for housing, they also increase congestion for a wide range of public services: doctors, hospitals, schools, universities, parks, retirement homes, and roads and bridges, as well as the utilities that supply water, electricity and sewers.

In theory, the supply of all these things could be expanded reasonably rapidly. In practice, expansion is slow. But the main reasons for that are, not a shortage of labour, but inadequate planning, insufficient financial resources and, as a result, construction that lags demand. The case for keeping annual immigration at traditional or even somewhat lower levels rests on more than the effect on house prices and public services, however. Immigration also depresses the wages of low-income workers, which results in greater income-equalizing transfers and the higher taxes required to pay for them. It also reduces employers' incentives to adopt labour-saving technology, an important source of growth in labour productivity and wages, and it allows employers to avoid the cost of operating apprenticeship programmes to train skilled workers. Japan's widespread success in using robots to deal with labour shortages caused by its aging population illustrates what could be done in Canada. In Germany, employers operate apprenticeship programmes to train skilled workers in the numbers industry needs. In this country, such programmes could relieve the shortage of skilled labour while



benefiting people already here, rather than new immigrants brought in specially to take highly paid skilled jobs currently going asking. Despite the Leger numbers suggesting many Canadians have concerns about big increases in the rate of immigration, the debate about it tends to be one-sided. We hear from the many groups that benefit from mass immigration: employers, immigration lawyers and consultants, real estate developers, political parties that traditionally do well in immigrant communities, idealists who want us to 'imagine there's no countries' and so on.

On the other side, the **Leger** numbers suggest, is a majority that is not at all opposed to immigration in principle but begins to inform itself on the subject and maybe even become politically active only when the costs become so large they can't be ignored any longer. In Switzerland during the 1970s an economic boom led to labour shortages and immigration was liberalized. It turned out that the need to produce housing infrastructure and public services for these immigrants actually worsened the labour shortage. The silent majority of Swiss citizens organized and took advantage of the opportunity to get government policy changed by demanding a public referendum that ultimately ended the liberal immigration policy. In Canada, changes in policies come through **Parliament** and the election of politicians. Numbers like those in the **Leger Poll** may begin to suggest to politicians that they can increase their election chances by catering to the majority who would prefer somewhat reduced immigration but also a fundamental reform of the system currently used to determine the number and characteristics of immigrants. Such a reform would put greater emphasis on market forces rather than politicians and bureaucrats in setting immigration levels. Immigrants would be admitted only if they possessed a formal offer of employment in Canada that paid at least the average earned by workers in the region where they would be employed. Under this system, employers' self-interest would ensure that workers would have the skills and personal characteristics required for success on the job. The requirement for minimum pay would prevent floods of immigrants competing with Canada's low-wage workers and ensure that those who did come had the income needed for a life free from the need for public subsidies. Worrying about immigration is not enough. Only the election of politicians committed to this kind of reform will restore mental peace." (**Herbert Grubel, Financial Post, January 4, 2023**)

The author, himself an immigrant to Canada, is an emeritus professor of economics at Simon Fraser University and a senior fellow at the Fraser Institute. Canadians may be waking up but Ottawa finds it most convenient to ignore or belittle Canadian misgivings: "Just over 1.3 million new immigrants settled permanently in Canada from 2016 to 2021 [or nearly one-and-a-half million in just five years], the highest number of recent immigrants recorded in a Canadian census." (**Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada News Release, January 3, 2023**) Where 2021 was an all-time record breaker of a year in the immigration game, 2022 went ahead and smashed that record. With plans to admit 500,000 each year for the foreseeable, that's one-and-a-half million – likely more -- every three years.

Half A Million-Plus Every Year Now!

"The federal **Liberals** are well on their way to meeting at least one of their marquee goals: 500,000 new immigrants per year by 2025. The stats for 2022 just came in, and last year saw a record 431,645 new permanent residents. That's a 6.4 per cent increase over 2021 — and this year aims to admit 465,000 new residents, which will be another 7.7 per cent increase over 2022. These numbers don't include temporary foreign workers or international students, which are also rising at record rates. This sort of rapid swell isn't just historic for Canada, it makes us the fastest-growing country in the **G7**. This would be great news [really?], if not for the fact that we're also among the least equipped to accept a mass influx of new people. To put those earlier numbers in context, the population of Halifax is about 440,000. Quebec City's is around 550,000. We are, or soon will be, adding the equivalent population of one of those cities each year.

Diversity is a pride point for many Canadians, and we're undoubtedly a stronger and better country thanks to immigrants' many contributions over the decades. [Really?] However, this doesn't mean we should blindly open the floodgates to hundreds of thousands more per year, when there's scant evidence we can support them. As much as we may want to welcome more immigrants into the fold, there needs to be a debate about whether now is the best time to boost targets. [How about a debate about how this country has been fundamentally changed without the 'luxury' of debate at any point along the way?] We may find that, until we get our house in order, the risks outweigh the potential rewards. Immigration isn't inherently good for a country, or even for immigrants, in and of itself. Positive outcomes for all parties require careful planning and a sense of realism. Unfortunately, it appears the Liberals have neither. Our health-care system ranks poorly against peer countries and seems to be only getting worse. We can barely even care for sick children in our major urban centres, let alone rural areas. Family doctors are practically the new Polkaroo. [Mythical creature devised by kiddies tv show.] Our housing situation is dismal. We don't have enough homes, and the ones we do have are exorbitantly expensive and out of reach for all but the very wealthiest young Canadians and newcomers. It seems as if we have shortages of every type of basic infrastructure and service, from transit to schools and childcare spots. International students are frequenting food banks, living in crowded and often unsanitary rooming houses and even driving five hours — each way — to attend classes. Many immigrants still can't work in their trained fields because we [or they] haven't taken the time to sort our credentialing systems. Despite just about everyone agreeing that foreign-trained doctors shouldn't be driving taxi cabs, it always seems to be a problem for another day. Meanwhile, Liberals argue that we need more newcomers to boost our economy and address labour shortages. Not only does this seem callous and exploitative in light of our inability to provide for needs like housing and health care, there's little evidence our current immigration system can produce these desired outcomes. At a certain point, we will get diminishing returns. [Really? Ontario — Canada's leading immigrant magnet for decades — is officially a 'have-not' province. Incredible].

While more immigrants mean more tax dollars, we don't get to just take from them without giving anything back. They, too, require doctors, affordable homes, schools and passports in a timely manner. They use subways and parks and, eventually, long-term care homes. By failing to invest heavily in infrastructure and government services, the Liberals are exacerbating resource scarcity and intensifying competition for fundamental goods and services. Historically, this never ends well. Eventually, people look for someone to blame for their declining quality of life, and that group tends to be newcomers. To be clear, such scarcity isn't the fault of immigrants. It's the fault of governments that either failed or didn't bother to properly plan to support their targets. Yet that will be of little consolation if Canadians' historically welcoming nature begins to take a turn. Canada's success with immigration is thanks to its record of sustainable growth. For the Liberals to throw that ethos out the window isn't just irresponsible, it's dangerous." (**National Post, January 5, 2023**)

Galloping Immigration

Sadly, as a nation of poltroons you normally cannot write a serious article about immigration without including three or four paragraphs gushing over the fabulous benefits brought about by immigration. These gifts are a little nebulous but we get the general drift. Writing on January 5, 2023, the **Globe and Mail's** national

affairs columnist, **Gary Mason** suggests “Canada is experiencing a population boom. Figures released recently by the federal government are quite staggering: the country grew by 437,000 new residents in 2022 and projections from Ottawa indicate that roughly 1.45 million more will join them over the next three years. According to a recent story in **The Globe and Mail**, since 2016, Canada has grown at nearly double the average rate of its G7 peers. In most cases, however, it isn’t newborns enhancing our population growth but adults coming to Canada through our immigration and refugee program – a fact that has consequences far and wide. [No kidding. If a fraction of the money devoted to immigration were directed to family-friendly policies, we might see more newborns. But] for years we have been told that economic growth depends on robust immigration. Immigrants are needed to bolster a work force being weakened, even decimated in some cases, by the demographic bulge of boomers who are retiring.

Also, immigrants are core to the Canadian identity, something of which we are unquestionably, and quite rightly, proud. At the same time, it is fair to ask whether the pace at which we are growing is in our best interests. Or whether in attempting to solve one problem, we are creating others. We may be about to find out. For starters, we need to figure out where all the newcomers will be staying. In recent years, headlines have been dominated by stories chronicling the housing crisis in Canada, especially in our major cities. The lack of supply has been responsible for a spike in prices. **Douglas Porter**, chief economist with the **Bank of Montreal**, recently said that the countries with the fastest population growth up to 2020 – countries such as this one and New Zealand – had greater house price inflation than those with stable populations or ones that decreased. If this is correct, one can assume house prices will only continue to reach levels that are unattainable for many, despite assurances from all levels of government that they are ‘on’ the problem. Supply can’t keep up with demand as it is, let alone meet the challenge of adding nearly 1.5 million more residents over the next three years. The furious pace of immigration will also put enormous pressure on a rental market that is already making life unbearable for many with a tight supply and soaring rents. The problems that this level of population growth contributes to would likely not be as bad if these newcomers were moving to towns and cities that could use more people. But that’s not the case.

The vast, vast majority of new immigrants are congregating in our biggest cities. It’s also fair to ask what these intake rates will do to our already overburdened health care system. Yes, some of those arriving here will fill critical voids in our health care front lines, but not nearly enough to make up for those who are retiring or leaving the profession because of burnout. And not nearly enough to compensate for the population boom we are anticipating. There are, for example, more than a million British Columbians without a family doctor, a number that is likely to only increase as more physicians retire and newcomers arrive each year by the tens of thousands. [**The Spectator** of June 20, 2015 notes that in Italy ‘scabies is rife (of 46,000 migrants tested this year, 4,700 were infested) and one in four migrants is said by doctors to have Hepatitis C’.] There are also voices suggesting that massive immigration on the scale we are witnessing may not be the great economic elixir being promoted by the federal government and the business sector. In fact, **David Green**, an economist with the **University of B.C.**, says this is a contention that turns out not to be true. His research shows immigration often lowers the wages for people competing with new immigrants for jobs. None of this is an argument for stopping immigration, of course. It is an indisputable fact that immigration has enriched our country beyond any

measure, making it the envy of the world. We are a more vibrant and culturally enriched nation as a result of it. Still, you can be pro-immigration and question the pace at which we are currently welcoming newcomers. You can be pro-immigration and ask whether we are at a moment when it would be prudent to step back and analyze the situation, and see whether we are exacerbating critical problems for which we have not yet found solutions. We should be able to have this conversation without fear of being labelled a racist or xenophobe. We should be able to have that conversation in the best interests of those already living here, and the ones yet to arrive.” (**Sabrina Maddeaux**, **National Post**, January 5, 2023)

The Desire To Eat Wildlife

“The Beijing-backed expansion of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in many African countries risks fueling the illegal wildlife trade and threatens the future of some of the world’s most endangered species, a new report has warned. The growth of the TCM market, coupled with the perception of Africa as a potential source of TCM ingredients, is a ‘prescription for disaster for some endangered animal species, such as leopards, pangolins and rhinos,’ the London-based **Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA)**, which investigates wildlife and environmental crime, said in the report published on Wednesday. China has been promoting traditional medicine, which dates back more than 2,500 years, alongside its flagship **Belt and Road Initiative**, which is developing road, rail and other major infrastructure projects across Africa. While most treatments are plant-based, demand from the industry has been blamed for pushing animals, including pangolins and rhinos, to the brink of extinction. ‘Ultimately, the unfettered growth of TCM poses a serious threat to the biodiversity found in many African countries, all in the name of short-term profit,’ **EIA Wildlife Campaigner Ceres Kam** said in a statement. ‘Any utilisation of threatened species in TCM could potentially stimulate further demand, incentivise wildlife crime and ultimately lead to overexploitation.’ The report, **Lethal Remedy: How the promotion of some traditional Chinese medicine in Africa poses a major threat to endangered wildlife**, said TCM products had never been more accessible in Africa, with TCM companies and clinics established in countries across the continent and Beijing stepping up promotional activities in line with the **COVID-19** pandemic.

While China has sought to crack down on rare species in traditional medicine, there are still some who prescribe such remedies as aphrodisiacs or to treat illnesses from cancer to skin conditions. The status of a ban on the use of rhino horn and tiger parts imposed in 1993 and suddenly lifted in 2018 before the government made an apparent u-turn, remains uncertain. ‘We understand that traditional medicine is integral to many cultures and plays an important role in healthcare in Africa and beyond,’ Kam said. ‘Our very real concern is that such a huge expansion of TCM in Africa, as is happening under **China’s Belt and Road Initiative**, will have the knock-on effect of drastically increasing demand for treatments containing wildlife and, in turn, cause more species to become threatened or extinct.’ With the **COVID-19** pandemic continuing, healthcare, including strengthening the ties between TCM and traditional African medicine, is likely to be a key issue at the forthcoming **Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)**, which is due to start in Senegal later [in November]. The **EIA** noted that South Africa, Cameroon, Tanzania and Togo were among African countries that had already signed agreements with China to develop TCM while South Africa and Namibia had recognized TCM as of

their public health systems [sic]. China replaced the United States as Africa's largest trading partner in 2009, and total trade topping \$200 billion in 2020, according to the **Africa Center for Strategic Studies.**" (Al Jazeera, November 10, 2021)

"According to the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, nearly three-quarters of emerging infectious diseases that spread to humans originate in animals. The **SARS** virus, for example, which killed 800 people between 2002 and 2004, is thought to have started in bats before spreading to civet cats at a wildlife market in the Chinese city of Foshan. In April, after its investigative team in China concluded a seafood market in Wuhan was the most likely route by which **COVID-19** first jumped to humans, **WHO** took the unprecedented move of urging countries to pause the sale of captured wild mammals at wet markets as an emergency measure. Animal welfare groups in Asia have been making the same demands for years, saying the unsanitary and cruel conditions in which wild and domestic animals are kept at wet markets are the perfect breeding ground for zoonotic diseases. Several Asian countries have passed new laws to curb the sale of 'bush meat' and limit activity at wet markets during the pandemic. But nearly all attempts to stamp out the trade have been hamstrung by the continuing popularity of bush meat among some people in Asia, the sector's vast economic value and a lack of enforcement. Stopping the trade 'will be a challenging exercise,' said **Li Shuo**, global policy adviser for **Greenpeace** in China.

Last July, a presidential decree was issued in Vietnam suspending all wildlife imports and introducing much stiffer penalties for violators, including up to 15 years in prison. But a survey last month by **PanNature**, an NGO, found no positive changes in the trade of wildlife products had occurred at the local level in Vietnam. Wet markets in the Mekong Delta and other parts of the country were found to still be selling turtles, birds and endangered wildlife species. In Indonesia, the site of Asia's worst **COVID-19** outbreak with more than 2.5 million cases and at least 67,000 deaths, the **Ministry of Environment and Forestry** has been trying to convince local officials to close wildlife markets around the country since the start of the pandemic. Officials in the city of Solo in Central Java were among those who took note, ordering the culling of hundreds of bats at Depok, one of the country's largest bird, dog and wildlife markets. But the victory proved short lived. 'They brutally exterminated hundreds of bats when **COVID-19** first hit and stopped selling them,' said **Lola Webber**, coalition coordinator at the **Dog Meat-Free Indonesia Coalition**. 'But from what I've heard from my sources, it's now business as usual.' **Marison Guciano**, founder of **Flight**, an NGO protecting Indonesian birdlife, confirms Webber's claim: 'I was there one week ago and they are still openly selling bats as well as snakes, rabbits, turtles, ferrets, beavers, cats, dogs, hamsters, hedgehogs, parrots, owls, crows and eagles.' The same scenario is playing out at wet markets across Indonesia. To mark **World Zoonoses Day** last week, animal welfare group **Four Paws** released photos taken in June showing hundreds of bats, rats, dogs, snakes, birds and other animals for sale at three different markets in Northern Sulawesi Province 2,000km (1,243 miles) northeast of Solo.

In April and May of last year, a few months after the pandemic began, global animal rights group **PETA** began visiting wet markets known to sell wildlife in Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, the Philippines, Indonesia and China. 'We expected new rules and regulations to have been put in place but we saw it was business as usual, with all different species in filthy cages, some alive, some dead, sometimes in the same cages,' says **PETA's** Asia

spokesman **Nirali Shah**. 'These environments are extremely frightening and stressful for the animals, which weakens their immune system and makes them more vulnerable to diseases that can jump across species and then to humans. At some markets, we saw animals taken from cages, killed on countertops streaked with blood from other species and workers not wearing gloves, no hygiene at all. [Isn't diversity great?] This combination of risky factors is like a ticking time bomb waiting for a new pandemic to begin,' she says. In China, where a total ban on the trade and consumption of wildlife was issued in February last year as the coronavirus surged in Wuhan, the situation has improved but only marginally, according to Shah. 'You can no longer see exotic wildlife for sale openly at wet markets in China. But they still sell all kinds of birds in unsanitary conditions. And in a lot of those markets we found that if you want a certain animal, no matter what it is, vendors can get it for you despite the ban.' This is not the first time China has attempted to end the bushmeat trade. In 2002, wildlife markets were closed because of **SARS** but reopened later because of economic pressure. In 2016, the Chinese Academy of Engineers valued the country's wildlife industry at \$76-billion, with bush meat accounting for \$19-billion of business activity each year and employing 6.3 million people in China. In Malaysia, captured wildlife and bushmeat was sometimes sold at wet markets before the pandemic. But it was more commonly available through direct sales and restaurants.



In August of last year, now-retired **Inspector General of Police Abdul Hamid Bador** gave district police chiefs one month to ensure their areas were free of illegal restaurants selling bushmeat. The wildlife department was instructed to assist police. 'Don't tell me with 300 to 500 personnel in an area, the existence of restaurants and illegal premises selling exotic animals can't be detected?' Abdul Hamid said at the time. A series of high-profile wild meat seizures followed at markets, restaurants and private homes. **Elizabeth John**, the Kuala Lumpur-based spokesperson for **TRAFFIC**, an NGO fighting the illegal trade in wildlife, says raids are a signal of both success and failure. 'In forming this joint task force between police and the wildlife officials, it's definitely a move in the right direction,' she said. 'But the fact that we have seen seizures continue even during the pandemic shows that warnings have not changed attitudes among consumers. Despite the risks it poses, the desire to eat wildlife is still out there.'" (Al Jazeera, July 13, 2021) So, is it a "desire to eat wildlife" or "ancient Chinese medicine?"